

## What's changed between when the Dementia Strategy started in 2019 and now (2023)?

In 2019 we started working on actions to improve the lives of people living with dementia as part of our [Sheffield Dementia Strategy](#). We have worked together across the NHS, Sheffield City Council, and voluntary/community sector organisations.

Our plans were based on what people with dementia, and people working with dementia, had said was important.

We have checked on our progress regularly to make sure we have been making a difference. We have asked people with dementia and their family carers what their experiences have been.

We last did a big survey in 2021 and we asked people with dementia, their family carers, and people working with people with dementia, what had made people's lives easier or better. We wanted to know what they wished could have been different. We used what people told us to:

- Check if our plans were helping people to live well with dementia
- Plan what organisations needed to do to make things better

This is a summary of what people told us and what we did based on what they said:

You Said	We Did
<p>The support of family and friends is very important.</p> <p>Family and friends sometimes need more help from health and care services than what they get now. Caring for someone with dementia can be difficult and stressful and people don't always know who can help.</p> <p>Many people don't think of themselves as carers and continue to help relatives without using the services in Sheffield that would reduce the impact of providing care.</p>	<p>We have helped more people who look after a loved one with dementia to think of themselves as carers and told them about the support they can have. We made a video with six family carers in Sheffield to help raise awareness, and over 2,000 people have watched this video.</p> <p>More family carers of people with dementia have been supported by Sheffield Carers Centre to get the help they need with their own health and wellbeing.</p> <p>We have also raised awareness with hospital staff, doctor's surgeries and other health and care staff about the importance of recognising and supporting family carers.</p> <p>We have run training and support sessions for family carers, to help them understand more about caring for someone with dementia, how to</p>

	look after their own wellbeing better, and to meet other carers in similar situations.
<p>Lots of people said that the support they had from community dementia services, social care and health services helped them and their loved ones to live well with dementia.</p> <p>People who knew about local community dementia services talked about the big difference that they made to them and their loved ones. But some people said that they did not know about their local services and they did not feel supported.</p> <p>Services tried hard to offer what support they could during the covid pandemic and lockdowns, and people said that this made a big difference to them.</p>	<p>The development of community dementia services and dementia link workers services have meant that there are more friendly and fun dementia-specific and dementia-friendly groups in local areas and across the city.</p> <p>In 2019 there were 5 monthly dementia cafés, but there are now 40+ dementia groups meeting monthly, fortnightly and weekly. 937 people with dementia attended their local groups in 2022-23, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dementia and Memory Cafés, social dining groups and coffee mornings</li> <li>• Walking groups, exercise and chairbics classes</li> <li>• Music and singing sessions</li> <li>• Carer support groups and pampering sessions</li> <li>• Culturally appropriate groups for men and groups for women</li> <li>• Gardening, allotment and farming projects and much more</li> </ul> <p>There are now new services that provide high quality, personalised dementia daytime opportunities in Sheffield. These support adults of all ages with dementia to continue to remain independent within their community, and to support their family carers in their caring roles.</p> <p>We have told lots of people (including health and care staff) about what support is available.</p>
Some people living with dementia and their family carers said they didn't know where to go to get information and advice about living well with dementia.	<p>We have improved the information and advice that is available to people living with dementia and their families. Dementia Advice Sheffield, which started in 2019 for professionals and volunteers, was opened to the public in 2022.</p> <p>People with dementia and their families can now contact Dementia Advice Sheffield via telephone or email with any non-medical query. We have told lots of people (including health and care staff) about this new service.</p>

<p>Some people said it had taken too long to get a dementia diagnosis. This made it harder for people to live well while they were waiting for their diagnosis and meant that some people missed out on care and treatment while they were waiting.</p>	<p>Health services have been trying to reduce the time it takes for a dementia diagnosis. But people are still having to wait a long time.</p> <p>To help people while they wait, we have started to tell people earlier in the diagnosis process about the community support that they can get while they are waiting (and after diagnosis), from community dementia services and Dementia Advice Sheffield.</p> <p>We have also worked with doctor's surgeries and the Hospital to help them to do everything they can to reduce waits for diagnosis.</p>
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Here are some more examples of differences that the actions in the plan have made to people's lives in the last four years:

- We have provided information and resources to doctor's surgeries to help improve the quality and number of annual Dementia Care Reviews that they provide. Less of these reviews happened during the covid pandemic and lockdowns but doctor's surgeries are now carrying out more again (about 79% of people with dementia had their review in 2022-23).
- We have improved the information and training that is available to health and care staff on important areas such as preventing falls for people with dementia, advanced care planning, and supporting people well at the end of their life.
- The Alzheimer's Society Short Term Intervention Service is now available to help people who are starting to struggle with their situation and need help to make plans that address their immediate difficulties. Doctor's surgeries and other health and care staff refer people into this service. About 90 people every three months are supported.
- Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust have been making improvements to how people living with dementia are looked after when they go into hospital – for example, through better designed wards, more staff training, and new dementia specific activities for people on wards. 146 staff members are now "Dementia Champions".
- We have worked with Yorkshire Ambulance Service, out of hours doctors, the Police and other organisations to start to improve the help people with advanced dementia get if they are in a dementia related crisis, for example due to their dementia symptoms suddenly getting much worse.

## **What are we still working on? This includes...**

- We know that people currently have to wait a long time to have a dementia diagnosis, so we are working hard to make this happen more quickly. There are long waits for people with early onset dementia as well as for older adults, so we need to reduce waits for all ages. We also need offer better support to people while they wait.
- People with dementia who need support in the community from Older Adults Mental Health Services can have long waiting times.
- People with dementia sometimes have to stay longer in hospital to come home (after they are well enough to leave hospital) than people without dementia – we are trying to help people get home as soon as they are well enough.
- Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are continuing to make improvements to the care of people with dementia in hospital. For example, through dementia specific and enhanced care individualised care plans for patients, through trialling referrals to community dementia support, and more dementia training for staff.
- There will be more training for people working with people dementia, including for a new training programme for social care staff.
- We still want to make Sheffield a more “Dementia Friendly” city.
- We will continue to raise awareness about ways to help prevent or delay dementia.

**We also want to know from you what else we should be doing to make things better. We will use what people tell us in our latest survey to help make our plans for the next few years.**

If you would like more information about living well with dementia, you can contact:

- **Dementia Advice Sheffield** - People with dementia and their families can now call with any non-medical query. Call 0114 250 2875.
- **Sheffield Directory** - [www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/dementia](http://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/dementia) - Local information and advice, groups and services, activities and events, care and support.
- **Sheffield Carers Centre** - [www.sheffieldcarers.org.uk](http://www.sheffieldcarers.org.uk) or telephone 0114 272 8362  
Free advice, information and support for family/friends who provide (unpaid) care.
- **(National) Alzheimer's Society** - [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) and Dementia Connect support line: Personalised information, support and advice on telephone 0333 150 3456.